

CORRECTED VERSION

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
26 May 2005 (26.05.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/047509 A2

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: C12N 15/52,
9/00, C12P 17/08, C12Q 1/68, GOIN 33/50 // (C12P
17/08, C12R 1:32)

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(21) International Application Number:
PCT/IB2004/003999

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(22) International Filing Date:
15 November 2004 (15.11.2004)

(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD,
MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,
PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM,
TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM,
ZW

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/519,864 14 November 2003 (14.11.2003) US

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(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM,
ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI,
FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE,
SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ,
GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— without international search report and to be republished
upon receipt of that report

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(48) Date of publication of this corrected version:
16 February 2006

(15) Information about Correction:
see PCT Gazette No. 07/2006 of 16 February 2006, Sec-
tion π

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guid-
ance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the begin-
ning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: THE MYCOLACTONE LOCUS : AN ASSEMBLY LINE FOR PRODUCING NOVEL POLYKETIDES, WITH
THERAPEUTIC AND PROPHYLATIC USES

(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to *Mycobacterium ulcerans* virulence plasmid, pMUM001 and particularly to a clus-
ter of genes carried by this plasmid that encode polyketide synthases (PKSs) and polyketide-modifying enzymes necessary and
sufficient for mycolactone biosynthesis. More particularly this invention is directed to novel purified or isolated polypeptides,
the polynucleotides encoding such polypeptides, processes for production of such polypeptides, antibodies generated against these
polypeptides, the use of such polynucleotides and polypeptides in diagnostic methods, kits, vaccines, therapy and for the production
of mycolactone derivatives or novel polyketides by combinatorial synthesis.